

December 14, 2009

**Public Notice for Water Quality Certification and/or Waste
Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)**

PG&E – Humboldt 60kV Power Line, Pole 0/7 Replacement
WDID No. 1B09136WNHU

Humboldt County

On November 16, 2009, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Pacific Gas and Electric Company (Applicant), requesting Federal Clean Water Act, section 401, Water Quality Certification for activities associated with replacing an existing power pole located in wetlands near the community of King Salmon. The proposed project will cause disturbance to waters of the United States associated with wetlands in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00.

The proposed project is located east of the Humboldt Bay Power Plant in King Salmon, between South Broadway Street and Humboldt Hill Road. The purpose of the proposed project is to replace an existing deteriorated wood power pole (pole 0/7) with the same size pole in essentially the same location. The proposed project involves accessing the existing pole location from 5900 Humboldt Hill Road with either a conventional line truck equipped with an auger or tracked equipment if wet soil conditions preclude wheeled vehicle access. Wetland protection matting will be used if necessary.

A new 2-foot diameter hole will be dug immediately adjacent to the existing pole and a new pole of the same diameter will be set in the hole. Small rock will be used to partially backfill the new hole to provide stability for the new pole in the wetland environment. Spoils from the new hole will be used for the remaining backfill around the new pole. The old pole will be removed and the resulting hole will be backfilled with remaining soil from the new pole installation. Minor trimming of vegetation within a 10-foot radius of the pole site may be required.

The new pole will have the same footprint area as the removed pole so the proposed project will not result in additional permanent impacts to wetlands. Auguring the hole for the new pole will result in temporary impacts to approximately 10 square feet of wetlands. Compensatory mitigation is not required for the proposed project. Temporary impacts to wetlands are expected to be restored to pre-project conditions within one year. Noncompensatory mitigation includes the use of BMPs for erosion control including covering and reseeding exposed soils. The proposed project is scheduled for September 2010, which is expected to be the driest time of year in the wetland. The project is expected to take less than one day to complete.

The Applicant plans to perform the project in accordance with the non-reporting provisions of the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Nationwide Permit No. 12, pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish is not required. Regional Water Board staff have determined that this project is categorically exempt from CEQA review (Class 2, Section

15302 – replacement or reconstruction) and anticipate filing a Notice of Exemption for this project.

Regional Water Board staff are proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office by mail during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. If you have any questions, please contact staff member Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801 within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

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